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Huntsville Center Bulletin



U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville



Wounded Warrior

Soldier shifts career to Huntsville Center



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Hails & Farewells

Hail: **Timothy Lape and Elaine Smith**, Business Management Office; **Chad Braun and Steven Pautz**, Chemical Demilitarization Directorate; **Scott Achin, Samuel Curry, Michael Duffy, Andrew Gross, Robert Halstead, Veronica Joyner, Alex Wallace and Melinda Windham**, Contracting; **Robert Fox, Michael Malone, Maureen Slater and Brendan Sontag**, Engineering Directorate; **Joel Torres**, Executive Office; **Jurelder Solomon**, Internal Reivew; **1st Lt. Paul Kelly, Randy Peacock, Rachel Phillips, Elisabeth Ramirez, Larry Sanders and David Thomas**, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate; **William Craven and Ken Jones**, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; **Deborah Hoskin**, Resource Management; **Karen Baker**, Small Business Office

Farewell: **Paris Coleman, Mattie Craig, Benjamin Davis, Christi Edwards, Gussie Hendrix, John Kirkwood, Jennifer Letson, Keith Mcpherson, Althea Rudolph and Erica Sykes**, CT; **Nancy Book, Mark Dembeck, Scott Sheffield, Kathy Sparks**, ED; **Joseph Broyles, David Hill and Ruth Smith**, ISPM; **Maj. Douglas Armstrong and Sandra Oliver**, MRO; **Judith Cochrane, Emmett Hopkins and Troy Orender**, OE; **Jo Anita Miley**, PA; **Victor Taylor**, Safety

Commander's thoughts



Happy New Year! I hope you enjoyed your holidays.

I think it's appropriate to start the New Year with a short wrap-up of the last year. I know I've said it before, but we ended fiscal year 2015 with \$2.1 billion in obligations. It was a little down from 2014, but great nonetheless. Our customers keep coming back because of all the good work you do every day on their behalf.

We saw some mission growth last year. For instance, USACE designated Huntsville Center as the Industrial Control Systems Technical Center of Expertise. That team is working hard to ensure new facilities are as protected as they can be from cyber threats, which as you know become more pervasive all the time. The ICS TCX, part of Engineering Directorate's Information Assurance and Information Technology Branch, promotes cybersecurity awareness and provides technical services related to ICS cybersecurity for military construction projects; sustainment, restoration and modernization projects; and operations and maintenance efforts.

We've seen programs grow as well. The DLA-Fuels Program started in 2010 providing recurring maintenance and minor repairs for 17 installations. In FY15, the team supported 277 installations in the continental United States and overseas (128 Army, 84 Navy/Marine Corps, 60 Air Force installations and 5 Marine Loading Arm sites) and 51 Air Force sites were added in FY15. The program executed approximately 1,219 maintenance visits and 4,294 service orders, and obligated \$80.2 million.

Our Energy Division is poised to award the first task order under the \$7 billion renewable energy Multiple

Award Task Order Contract – our Power Purchase Agreement Program. The first task order is expected to be awarded for a solar project on Redstone Arsenal, and another for a solar project at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, soon after that.

In 2015, the process to sunset the Chemical Demilitarization Directorate's mission to design and construct nine chemical agent destruction facilities began. The Pueblo Chemical Agent Pilot Plant started operations in March, and the Blue Grass facility completed construction in July. This has been a very successful mission for Huntsville Center, and work has been ongoing since 1990. Through this process we will strive to take care of our employees while retaining the vast amount of experience we've gained over the years.

Those are just a few highlights from 2015. There are many more.

We recently said good-bye to our Safety Chief, Victor Taylor during his retirement ceremony Dec. 23. He is retiring after nearly 42 years of service, starting with the Army Materiel Command, then the Tennessee Valley Authority and Department of Energy before coming to Huntsville Center. Others retiring included Kristi Javins, Installation Support; Sandy Oliver from the Management Review Office; Ruth Smith, ISPM; Kathy Sparks and Mark Dembeck, Engineering Directorate; Chris Cochrane, Ordnance and Explosives; and Elena Webster, Environmental and Munitions Center of Expertise. In January Eric Hines, also from the EM CX, will retire. I apologize if I missed anyone. It's bittersweet to say good-bye to people we have worked with, but it's an opportunity for them to start the next phase of their



Col. Robert Ruch
Huntsville Center Commander

lives. I wish them all the best in whatever they choose to pursue.

We'll start 2016 by looking at transition within the workforce. You may know I will retire in the spring, but it's not just that transition we'll look into. As you can tell from the previous paragraph, a lot of folks have started retiring, many of them from the Baby Boom Generation. As these employees leave, they are being replaced by employees in the Millennial Generation and younger! As an organization, we have to learn how to attract and retain younger employees. There needs to be an exchange between the generations that passes knowledge to younger employees and lets older employees know how the younger generations think and what is important to them. We'll discuss this and other topics at the strategic off-site later this month.

I'll close this the same way I started: Happy New Year! Stay safe and keep up the great work.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

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BULLETIN

Commander..... Col. Robert Ruch
Chief, Public Affairs..... Debra Valine
Editor..... William S. Farrow



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By Amy Newcomb
Public Affairs Office

To what generation were you born?

Generation X

What is your education?

Bachelor of Science in Accounting
from Oakwood University

What kind of experience do you?

I worked for nine years with the Department of Internal Audit for the City of Fort Worth (City Hall) in Fort Worth, Texas. I initially started as an Internal Audit Intern and was recognized as the department's first Internal Auditor Intern. I ended my tenure with the city as a senior auditor.

What is your job title?

Senior Internal Review Auditor.

In your opinion, what is the best campaign plan goal/objective pertaining to your work?

All Huntsville Center campaign plan goals are pertinent to my work. One of the CEHNC-Internal Review Department missions is to ensure that our audit objectives and activities align with Huntsville Center to support the USACE Campaign Plan.

What are your ambitions?

The final verdict is still out on that one. In the meantime, thus far, I have accomplished most goals I have set out to accomplish. So, I have to



Jurelder Solomon

remain trustful of the declaration detailed in Jeremiah 29:11-14.

What is the best advice you have received?

Be yourself!

What is the best advice you could give?

There are two. First, don't give up! As simple as it may seem. There are times in your life when you want to give up, or you may be at the peak of your dream coming into fruition. At this time you may want to give up because you may become exhausted in trying to accomplish your dream or trying to get over a hurdle. Just don't give up, you are almost there! Second, the strength you seek is within!

It's a bad day when?

I feel exhausted/overwhelmed

It's a good day when?

When I spend time with my family and/or close friends

Who are your role models?

My mother, Ms. Patrice Randle a city auditor, City of Fort Worth, Texas; Ms. Lori Cordell-Meikle, Internal Review chief; and Deidre Emerson, assistant city manager, City of Waco, Texas

What are you working on?

Completing professional certifications

The **Employee Spotlight** is intended to let Center employees shine for positively impacting the organization through mission achievements. Employees are featured quarterly in the Huntsville Center Bulletin. If you'd like to nominate someone within your office for this recognition, please contact William S. Farrow, Public Affairs Office, at 256-895-1694, or email: william.farrow@usace.army.mil.

The Bulletin asks:

With winter upon us, how do you prefer to receive weather-related, delayed-reporting notification?

““ Facebook. I usually check it in the morning anyway, so if there’s a threat of bad weather, I’ll check the Center’s Facebook page to see weather posts...””

Alan Fearn
Center Contracting



““ Social media or text. It would be nice if we had a system like Redstone Arsenal has that leaves a message on your home phone or sends a text to your mobile phone. ””

Pam Brown
Audit Office

““ I check the Huntsville Center website. But a text message, an e-mail or a phone call from my supervisor would be the best way to receive notification. ””

Kevin Healy
Engineering Directorate



Where to find there is a threat of inclement winter weather



Upon notification from the commander, Huntsville Center public affairs office updates pertinent weather-related information on the Center’s website (www.hnc.usace.army.mil), posts to the Center’s Facebook page (www.facebook.com/HuntsvilleCenter) and sends tweets via Twitter (twitter.com/CEHNC). You may also call 1-800-380-3715 to receive a recorded message on the Center’s reporting status.

Reserve Soldiers contracting training focuses on ‘Corps’ curriculum

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

An informal conversation between two Army Reserve contracting officers developed into an opportunity to provide Army Reserve Soldiers with crucial acquisitions training prior to their deployment next year.

In early 2015, Army Reserve Maj. Camille Morgan, 915th Contracting Battalion, Baltimore, Maryland, was speaking with her Reserve unit commander about the civilian position she had taken as a contracting officer at Huntsville Center.

Morgan explained to Lt. Col. Rene Bright, 915th CBN commander, how experienced acquisition specialists worked in almost every aspect of the Center’s specialized programs focused on supporting the Department of Defense and other government agencies.

Morgan noted that not only is Huntsville Center’s acquisition force experienced at executing the Center’s contracting actions, but many of the contracting personnel at the Center had previous experience working U.S. Army Corps of Engineers missions at deployed locations. Morgan said that since there were many Soldiers in her unit new to the Army contracting career field, she and Bright devised a plan to bring the Soldiers up-to-speed. Morgan said after speaking with Bright further, they realized there might be a possibility to provide their Soldiers with an opportunity to work at Huntsville Center, receive on-the-job training performing contracting actions, and gain valuable experience working with the Corps of Engineers.

“Many of our Soldiers had completed the basic contracting foundation course, but they had minimal on-the-job training,” Morgan said. “So we thought there might be an opportunity for our Soldiers to work alongside Center contracting officers and gain experience. We also thought about conducting our drill weekends at Huntsville Center.”

The timing of the concept couldn’t have been better for Bright, who also serves as the Army Reserve Support Center Advisor for the Army Contracting Command. In that capacity Bright is responsible for managing more than 120 Army Reserve contracting officers from the 915th and 917th Contracting Battalion, San Antonio, Texas. Although the 915th CBN has deployed its Soldiers in support of the Army’s mission in East Africa, both the 915th and 917th CBN were recently tasked with taking on new missions supporting Central Command operations in South West Asia.

“We’re Reservists – we only drill one weekend a month, but it takes us a full year to become certified, so we have to



Photo by William S. Farrow

Shirley Burke-Mitchell provides Corps of Engineers Financial Management System training to Reserve Soldiers training at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville. A cadre of Huntsville Center acquisition specialists with expertise in a variety of procurement areas volunteered to provide the training the Soldiers require prior to their deployment in 2016.

put our Soldiers on active duty orders to get them the training they require, and we are always looking for creative ways to get that contracting experience,” Bright said.

With the concept in mind, Morgan took the idea to her immediate supervisor at the Center who then elevated the concept to Colleen O’Keefe, Center Chief of Contracting.

“I thought it was a great idea,” O’Keefe said. “Huntsville Center is such a different USACE organization – we don’t do a lot of civil works projects – most of our work is focused on specialized support to all of the Corps’ divisions and districts throughout the world. But also, Huntsville Center programs are focused on supporting the warfighter. This idea is just an extension of that support, so assisting these Soldiers with their training was an easy decision for me. So obviously, I said yes.”

After staffing the request through the appropriate channels and getting approval from Army Reserve and Corps of Engineers leadership, the wheels were put in motion.

By October, Reserve Soldiers were gaining experience required for Level I certification.

Maj. Jose Gamboa, 917th CBN, said Huntsville Center is providing the right training focused on the deployed environment.

“We’re getting a lot of training related to forward deployment like the standard procurement system training and fundamentals of services, obligations, closeouts and the applications associated with blanket purchase agreements. We’re getting the right training to be successful down range,” Gamboa said.

Commander's Town Hall sets 2016 goals

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

Standing in front of employees at the annual Huntsville Center Town Hall, Col. Robert Ruch, Huntsville Center commander, used the opportunity to provide the crowd with holiday wishes, express his thanks for all the hard work and provide information regarding Center priorities and goals for 2016.

"I just want to thank everybody for the super hard work that you do to support the Department of Defense and all the troops. Sometimes we just have to sit back and think about all we do and all the people we support and the products we're delivering," Ruch said in his opening remarks.

Ruch thanked the deployed Huntsville Center employees and touched on some of the missions the Center is supporting both overseas and stateside to include range clean-up projects in Afghanistan and the recently completed work at a stateside military hospital.

In Afghanistan, Huntsville Center's Ordnance and Explosives Directorate's International Operations Division has people deployed to support Environmental Footprint Reduction, an Afghanistan project to remediate forward operating bases and combat outposts – especially training ranges – as units draw down.

"The work done by the OE group over there is really incredible – it's hard work, and it's making a difference. These are measurable impacts we are having there and it's saving lives," Ruch said.

Ruch moved his address from overseas projects to work the Center is doing on American soil, explaining that he was at Fort Campbell,



Photo by David Gillespie

Huntsville Center Commander Col. Robert Ruch (left) participated in the Dec. 17 ribbon cutting at Fort Campbell, Kentucky's Blanchfield Army Community Hospital commemorating the \$68 million upgrade to the facility. During the Dec. 18 Huntsville Center Town Hall with Center employees, Ruch spotlighted work the Center recently contributed to the project.

Kentucky, Dec. 17 for a ribbon cutting ceremony marking the end of the Blanchfield Army Community Hospital construction and renovation project.

Huntsville Center's Initial Outfitting and Transition Program provided support for more than \$14 million in services for the \$68 million project. Ruch said he toured the facility and spent time with the head nurse there who was "glowing" about the upgrades.

It's (improved) how they deliver care to their patients now," Ruch said. "The equipment we brought in and how we set it up makes a difference for the Soldiers and the families being treated there."

Ruch provided results to the Huntsville Center Climate and 2015 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey that saw USACE jump 38 places from 149 to 111 in the survey that is a tool measuring employees' perceptions of whether, and to what extent, conditions characterizing successful organizations are present in their agencies.

Ruch spotlighted the successes

he believes resulted in a 90 percent customer satisfaction rating and other successes that include volunteer work from the activities association and a well-received employee of the month and commander's bucks-on-the-spot reward programs.

For 2016, Ruch said his focus is providing more leased office space to accommodate program growth, improving supervisor-subordinate counseling and more focus placed on individual development plans to ensure employees receive the training and education they require to grow professionally.

Building renovations are a priority for Ruch who spoke about security upgrades and a new 8-year lease for the Government Services Administration-owned facility that includes owner upgrades and Huntsville Center-backed improvements valued and at more than \$1 million.

After presenting personnel recognitions and awards, Ruch ended the event with a question and answer period.

FRP declares deconstruction project a success

By Amy Newcomb
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville Facilities Reduction Program, in coordination with the Kansas City District, recently finalized a deconstruction pilot project at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

The project, awarded in September 2014, cost less than \$800,000, \$10.31 per square foot, and entailed the salvage and reuse of materials from three World War II-era buildings.

During straight demolition a building is quickly and efficiently torn down, usually with large mechanical devices like excavators, with the main goals being cost reduction and material diversion.

“We reduce real property footprint at minimal cost and divert as much of the material from the removed building as possible to other financially viable uses – reuse or recycling – in lieu of sending it all to a landfill,” said Dave Shockley, Facilities Division branch chief. “The FRP is meeting or exceeding the 60 percent diversion standard using the demolition approach.”

However, FRP is always exploring better ways and means of getting the job done, Shockley said.

“Experience is a great teacher,” he said. “We realize there are situations where the way we’ve always done it may have been good enough, but we are not willing to just rest on past success when we have the ability to learn more and make it better.”

During deconstruction, a contractor removes the greatest amount of materials, components and products that are intact and suitable for reuse or recycle.

When material is reused, it is used for its intended purpose. For example, a door would be used as a door.

When an item is recycled, it can be broken down and used for something else. While recycling diverts material from landfill, it still requires energy, and if it can’t be recycled it incurs disposal costs.

The Fort Leonard Wood buildings provided a situation for deconstruction that also supported the Installation Strategic Sustainability Plan, said Bryan Parker, Directorate of Public Works chief of planning.

In 2010, Parker went to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, as the Fort Leonard Wood DPW master planner to discuss sustainability.

“Some of the people I had talked to were in the solid waste arena and they were talking about how they had just completed a project where they had deconstructed some old wood barracks and recovered the timber,” Parker said.

Parker used JBLM’s method as a baseline for its buildings – a laundry, warehouse and chapel. But first, the buildings had



Courtesy photo

Bhate employees work to deconstruct a chapel — one of three buildings selected for the deconstruction pilot program — on Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Materials from the chapel were salvaged for reuse or recycle.

to be evaluated.

When evaluating a building for deconstruction, engineers must consider the type of construction, contents and condition and their suitability for reuse, as well as the project itself, project schedule, and markets and industry capabilities.

Driving this process is exactly what former Research Architect Tom Napier, Construction Engineering Research Laboratory, did with the Fort Leonard Wood buildings.

“My role was to help support Fort Leonard Wood with the expectation that this project would be completed in parallel with the other sustainability demonstrations, and we would have a result and conclusion for the material salvage and reuse along with water quality and energy,” Napier said.

After the project was underway, it hit a snag; the warehouse became unstable during deconstruction efforts because of excessive rotting of the wooden structure. Due to the increase in risk to contractor employees working inside and around the building, the decision was made to stop deconstruction and demolish the building.

However, while the building survived only a portion of the deconstruction effort, not all was lost. Bhate, the contractor, was still able to reuse or recycle 297 tons of material, diverting more than 63 percent from landfill.

The two buildings left – the chapel and laundry – proved even more successful. From the chapel, more than 250 tons of material was reused or recycled with almost 85 percent diversion, and nearly 700 tons of material was reused or recycled from the laundry with a 73 percent diversion rate.

Overall, the three buildings totaled 1,717 tons of material of which 1,246 tons was reused or recycled, making the project a successful venture.

Commercial Utilities Program develops reliable energy for Afghan forces

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville Commercial Utilities Program used a Multiple Award Task Order Contract to select an American company as the Power Purchase Agreement consultant to help draft the blueprint for developing a secure electrical grid and increasing capacity to supply Afghan security installations with sustainable electricity.

Enabling Afghan National Defense and Security Forces to transition from expensive, unreliable diesel-generated electricity to a more cost-effective power grid was a concept developed by the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan, which tasked the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center for support.

The five-person team of engineers and scientists ERDC put together included Bernard Givan, Huntsville Center’s CUP program manager. Givan, a public utilities specialist, said he was asked to join the team because of his expertise in utility projects.

“They (ERDC) asked me to provide contract and technical support in the development of a framework,” Givan said. “However, the requirements for this project are different from Huntsville Center’s Power Purchase Agreement program, which is based on third-party financing of renewable energy.

“The framework actually involved more than the typical PPA because a substantial amount of power delivery infrastructure is necessary to interconnect the new generation assets to improve and stabilize electrical power supply for ANDSF. That’s why using the consultant under the CUP MATOC was instrumental to determine how the framework would shape up.”



Courtesy photo

Afghan utility workers prepare power lines at the Kajaki Dam in Afghanistan. The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville’s Commercial Utilities Program was instrumental in developing a comprehensive agreement known as a Power Delivery Power Purchase Agreement that will provide reliable energy for Afghan security forces.

Givan said the framework covered terms and conditions, contingencies for various scenarios, legal protections for the parties involved and methods for resolving disputes or modifying the agreement. CSTC-A then used the framework to insert specific agreement terms that were decided by the pertinent parties in theater.

As the utility consultant provided the research for the framework, other ERDC team members detailed the potential risks caused by political, economic, natural and potential enemy factors, as well as the capability and willingness of the parties to maintain the agreement.

This analysis enabled leaders to identify the various stressors that could contribute to failure of the agreement. The process gave CSTC-A the flexibility to change the agreement as the involved

parties continued to negotiate while maintaining the legal framework.

Givan said the result of the framework was a comprehensive agreement known as a Power Delivery Power Purchase Agreement between the Afghanistan Ministry of Interior and Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat – the main power utility licensed to purchase, transmit, distribute and supply electricity in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

It also reduced the number of man hours CSTC-A needed to dedicate toward this agreement, allowing them to maintain the aggressive timelines of other projects critical to ANDSF success.

In September, NATO nations Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands contributed \$200 million to back the PDPPA. The Asian Development Bank will manage the \$200 million contribution and DABS will add the ANDSF facilities to the electric grid over the next five years according to a planned schedule.

The U.S. has already contributed more than \$100 million to the northern parts of the national transmission grid in Afghanistan.

More than 90 percent of ANDSF facilities rely on diesel generators at an annual cost of more than \$300 million. The increased capacity provided by the PDPPA will allow many of these facilities to transition to a power grid potentially slashing the power budget in half, from 53 cents per kilowatt hour to 22 cents per kWh.

The investment is also aiming at doubling the capacity of the existing electric grid through the construction of a 500 kilovolts transmission line from Turkmenistan to Kabul.

Thirteen years ago, only 6 percent of Afghan citizens had electricity – today 30 percent of the nation has power.

Task Force POWER team responds to emergency in Kabul

By Debra Valine
Public Affairs Office

During a site visit to Afghanistan in October, Col. Robert Ruch, commander, U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, presented certificates of appreciation to five individuals working under contract with Huntsville Center in support of Task Force POWER (Protect Our Warfighters and Electrical Resources).

EXP Federal employees Shane Deek, Kevin Flynn, Rafael Varela, Abel Martinez and Sean McMurtrey were at Camp Integrity, Afghanistan, when the compound came under attack. The team had been on-site to inspect and repair a faulty grounding/bonding system that resulted in two incidents of electrical shock to U.S. personnel. These gentlemen, who arrived on-site in July, worked diligently for a month inspecting and repairing electrical system deficiencies and were within a few days of completing the inspections and repairs at the installation.

On Aug. 7, the camp was attacked. Nine Coalition Force Personnel were killed. The attack was concentrated at the Main Entry Control Point area of the camp; the large blast resulted in a number of facilities sustaining significant damage. Coalition forces repelled the insurgents and the “all clear” was issued the following morning.

According to Fred Cartes, Huntsville Center’s Task Force POWER project manager and contracting officer’s representative, after the all clear was given, Deek, Flynn, Varela, Martinez and McMurtrey immediately began inspecting the area and the facilities’ electrical systems for damage. Numerous facilities sustained significant damage.

“The actions of these individuals enabled other crews to safely remove the destroyed materials and begin reconstruction,” Cartes said. “The team members then moved on to concentrate on restoring power to the most critical areas and installing temporary electrical power solutions as directed. This included re-energizing the Jammer, Main Entry Control Point systems and a new X-ray machine. Work continued for several more days using available materials and supplies to make repairs wherever possible. They also assisted in the general battle damage clean up around camp.”

“These individuals performed above and beyond the scope of their contract,” Ruch said. “When given the opportunity to be replaced, they chose to stay and continue providing assistance until the mission was complete or materials exhausted. We appreciate the efforts of these

individuals whose actions went substantially beyond their contract requirements.”

The electricians of Task Force POWER are in theater to ensure that service members have safe and secure work and living spaces, so that they can complete the daily mission, Cartes said. As of Nov. 17, Task Force POWER had inspected 6,845 facilities totaling more than 4.7 million square feet; repaired more than 4.1 million square feet; and identified 98,907 flashes and priorities.

“Flashes are considered electrical Life/Health/Safety conditions that we find and repair,” Cartes said. “Priorities are code violations that do not present an LHS condition. We perform our electrical inspection and repair duties Afghanistan wide, to include camps that are in remote locations where conditions are austere.”

Huntsville Center has been supporting Task Force POWER since 2009 performing low voltage electrical inspections (600 volts and below) and emergency life, health and safety electrical repairs of all U.S. Forces-occupied facilities within Afghanistan.



Courtesy photo

Col. Robert Ruch, commander, U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, right, and Fred Cartes, Task Force POWER (Protect Our Warfighters and Electrical Resources) project manager and contracting officer’s representative, left, present certificates of achievement to Rafael Varela, Kevin Flynn and Shane Deek, EXP Federal, for going above and beyond following an attack on Camp Integrity, Afghanistan in August, where nine Coalition Force Personnel were killed. Abel Martinez and Sean McMurtrey also received certificates.

Furnishings Program expands, includes Air Force project

By Amy Newcomb
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center Huntsville's Furnishings Program team recently completed quality assurance inspections on three projects totaling \$1.25 million worth of furnishings and equipment at Fort Stewart, Georgia.

QA inspections included an Air Force facility, which is an expansion of the program's scope. The Furnishings Program purchases barracks and administrative furnishings and equipment for Army and Navy installations.

The \$242,000 unit-funded project for the Air Support Operations Center building provided equipment that will contribute to the level and quality of training for the 15th Air Support Operations Squadron's joint terminal attack controllers who support the 3rd Infantry Division, said Senior Master Sgt. Michael Gleissner, 15th ASOS operations superintendent.

"The furniture that we have here through the folks at Huntsville Center will meet our requirements in that it has plenty of the capabilities that we require for our IT equipment and any training we do," Gleissner said. "The manufacturers were more than helpful and subsequently that was what resulted in the furniture we have here."

While at Fort Stewart, the Furnishings Program team finalized a \$385,000 project within the Gray Eagle Unmanned Aerial System cantonment area that included a company operations facility, tactical equipment maintenance facility, operations and storage facility, and control tower.

They also completed a follow-up QA site visit for \$593,000 of furnishings and equipment for the Sky Warrior - Unmanned Aerial Surveillance Facility to ensure the unit's functional requirements were still being met.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Systems Repairer Spc. Nathan Kennedy, 3rd Aviation Regiment, works in the Sky Warrior facility and from experience understands the importance of having equipment that helps meet mission requirements.

"The tool benches are nice from a stationary point of view ... we utilize the benches a lot as far as plugging our logbooks in, and putting the parts on, so we don't have them scattered out all over the floor," he said. "The lockers, a long with the toolboxes, help with excess parts from the aircraft."

Kennedy and fellow UAV systems repairers can label lockers with specific aircraft numbered parts for easy access, as well as carry heavy equipment through the hangar on carts and tables with wheels, which makes their jobs easier, he said.

"I spent 10 months in Afghanistan where we had clam



Photo by Rusty Torbett, ACE-IT

Huntsville Center has more than 25 interior designers on staff who support the U.S. armed forces in three specialized areas: Unaccompanied Housing, Integrated Medical Furniture and Administrative Office.

shells for 12 aircraft. We didn't have the tool benches, we didn't have the lockers," Kennedy added. "I definitely looked forward to coming back here and having the extra [equipment] because we definitely had stuff laying out on the floor and in cardboard boxes."

The Furnishings Program takes pride in helping customers meet mission requirements.

"Most of our projects are started years in advance," said Leslie Yarbrough, program manager for the Furnishings Program. "Through the requirements gathering process and having a great relationship with our customers, we are able to ensure products meet the functional need for mission specific daily operations."

The Furnishings Program interior designers are available during every step of the process.

"Our project managers, interior designers and contracting staff are what makes the program successful," she said. "We have people who care about the Soldiers in the field, meeting the mission and ensuring the job is done accurately."

During the procurement process, contracting staff and interior designers use cost reduction methodology, which ensures cost avoidance and saves the customer money.

"By doing this our customers are able to procure additional furnishings in the field to help the Soldiers," Yarbrough said. "They would not have been able to get additional furnishings if they had purchased furniture on their own or gone through a different procurement agency."

Wounded Warrior's career

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

According to the Army, 78 percent of the more than 20,000 wounded, ill and injured Soldiers currently assigned to the Army Wounded Warrior Command's 25 Warrior Transition Units were deployed to combat zones.

However, only about 5 percent of their wounds are associated with bullets and explosions.

Huntsville, Alabama native Staff Sgt. Patrick Henry, a Wounded Warrior assigned to the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville's Internal Review Office, can certainly attest to that.

As an Army Reservist with the 663rd Engineering Company, Sheffield, Alabama, Henry deployed to Afghanistan in February 2014, as a heavy equipment operator and was assigned to a unit training Afghan National Army soldiers on engineering equipment operation and projects. Henry said his injury occurred during routine daily operations.

"About five months in (the deployment), while we were doing our own convoy operations training, I went to lift a tow bar and had a shooting pain go down my leg and up my back," Henry recalls. "I went to see the medics and received some medicine for the pain and after a few days I was back to normal. Then, roughly a month later, I started having sharp pains in my leg and eventually part of my lower leg went numb."

At that point, it was determined Henry required care that wasn't available in theater. Henry was then flown to Germany for an MRI and further assessment at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

Henry was diagnosed with a herniated disc at the L5-S1 area of his spine. Henry was soon in surgery to remove a piece of the disk lodged between the vertebra and nerve.

His deployment was over. Henry was a Wounded Warrior. He was soon on his way to Fort Gordon, Georgia, and placed in the Warrior Transition Unit there.

While "stationed" at Fort Gordon, Henry's time there was based on attending daily WTU formations and showing up for medical and physical therapy appointments.

For more than eight months Henry followed this routine. His family visited when they could. Henry missed home and was ready to get back to Huntsville.

Even though he was also having an issue with his shoulder, the Army was ready to accommodate Henry and provided him with orders to a Community Care Unit at Fort Benning, Georgia, which services Reserve and Guard Soldiers living in Alabama.

Henry's care providers there focused on a path toward continued care and recovery. Although he was technically "stationed" at Fort Benning, Soldiers assigned to CCUs are allowed to return to their home communities and with the

support of their Families, use the TRICARE network while continuing to receive the benefits of a WTU staff and access to Army installation resources to ensure that all Soldiers have the same experience across the Wounded Warrior Program.

"Once my back was deemed capable, they started looking into my shoulder pain. I had another MRI that showed a bone spur rubbing a tendon and causing my pain. But my medical team knew I could receive good care for the problem under TRICARE in Huntsville and it was approved. I out-processed Fort Gordon and reported to the CCU in early April, and soon after that I was headed home to surprise my family," Henry said.

However, shortly after Henry was settled into his Huntsville home with his wife and family, he was back in the hospital for orthoscopic surgery to repair the shoulder. Only this time, he was under the care of a local civilian orthopedic surgeon and his post-surgery recovery was through a local physical therapy provider.

After several weeks of physical therapy and with his back and shoulder mended, Henry said he was feeling well enough to begin the reintegration process.

After returning home to Huntsville, Henry went through the CCU to inquire about filling a position under Operation Warfighter, a Department of Defense program designed to allow recovering service members from all branches to intern at local federal agencies.

Since Henry had been in an Engineering Battalion, he figured the best opportunity for him would be to work with the Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville.

"It looked like a good fit," Henry recalls. "Huntsville Center was a Corps of Engineers organization, and I was coming from an engineering unit."

For Lori Cordell-Meikle, Huntsville Center Internal Review director, the timing of Henry's request was perfect.

Around the same period of time as Henry's in processing to the CCU at Fort Benning (and subsequently returning to Huntsville), the IR office had restructured and she found herself short an auditor. That's when she began inquiring internally as to how she could receive personnel support while trying to back fill that position. In her research to fill the position, she became aware of the Wounded Warrior Program.

After she contacted the WWP and expressed interest in putting a Wounded Warrior to work, Cordell-Meikle said she began receiving resumes and setting up interviews with Soldiers, which included an interview with Henry in June.

Henry said during the interview Cordell-Meikle was straight forward about the requirements explaining what the usual processes are in auditing.

After informing him of the type of work an auditing office does, Cordell-Meikle said he expressed that he was very open to learning new skills and mentioned that he would be willing to enroll in some accounting classes on his own to prepare him for

shifts to Huntsville Center



Courtesy photo

Staff Sgt. Patrick Henry (right) and Sgt. David Ficks, 663rd Engineering Company, pose for a photo at an Afghan National Army base in 2014 where they were training ANA soldiers on heavy equipment operation and engineering projects. Henry is a Wounded Warrior assigned to the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville's Internal Review Office.

audit work.

"I was immediately impressed by Henry's drive and desire to get back to work," Cordell-Meikle said. "Even though he was convalescing, he still wanted to work to support the Army. Knowing that he was accustomed to following Army Standards and Regulations, I thought it would be a good fit."

Cordell-Meikle hired Henry and Henry hit the ground running, demonstrating a natural ability not only in understanding mission objectives for internal review but also the ability to execute audit related duties.

"I can honestly say that I made the absolute right choice," Cordell-Meikle said. "He has gone above and beyond the call of duty familiarizing himself with

statutory and regulatory requirements of our office.

"His thirst and drive have become invaluable to the success of internal review."

Henry has been such a good fit that Cordell-Meikle plans to keep him full-time. A few months after Henry began working for her, she put in a Position Order Request through the Personnel Force Innovation program that matches Guard and Reserve service members with defense agencies, providing the agencies a means to fill critical workforce needs.

The request was approved and Cordell-Meikle is taking the required steps to bring Henry on board as an active duty Soldier working for Huntsville Center IR once he is medically released by his

physicians from the WWP.

Henry said the bottom line is that his Army career has opened doors for him even after sustaining his injuries.

With eight years left until he's retirement eligible, Henry said he plans on re-enlisting soon and hopes to stay with Huntsville Center for quite some time. He is enrolled at Calhoun Community College taking accounting courses he needs for his position in IR. He said he plans to parlay those courses into a four-year degree in business while continuing to push through his military career.

"If I had it to do all over again, knowing what all I would go through, I would certainly do it," Henry said. "I do not plan on leaving the Army any time soon."

International Operations Division reducing environmental footprint in Afghanistan

By Julia Bobick
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville is managing the \$21.5 million contract for the environmental footprint reduction at more than 60 U.S. military camps and bases being closed throughout Afghanistan as a result of the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the country.

Huntsville Center's International Operations Division Environmental Footprint Reduction, Afghanistan project supports the mission to remediate forward operating bases and combat outposts as units draw down. All former U.S. military sites not being turned over to the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan must be restored to the environmental condition that existed prior to U.S. occupation, according to Huntsville Center's EFR Project Manager Karen R. Moore.

Environmental footprint reduction efforts aim to reduce the effect military activities have had on the environment – troops, vehicles. One initiative in the project – sorting waste in a 186-acre field and crushing concrete to create repurposed aggregate for Bagram – is estimated to save the garrison \$4.5 million annually, Moore said. Additional tasks include the demilitarization of relocatable buildings, defensive barriers, miscellaneous concrete and/or steel structures, and other regulated materials, which could consist of black-water lagoons, petroleum products, petroleum tanks and tank farms, paints and burn pits.

As of the end of October, the seven teams of more than 300 contracted employees and local Afghanistan labor had removed more than 850 structures; more than 6,000 defensive barriers; 3,306,114 pounds of demolition and miscellaneous debris; 4,357,112 pounds of scrap metal; 7,302,698 pounds of

scrap wood; and 207,956 pounds of wire and cable, as well as 11,849 pounds of florescent lights for hazardous material disposal.

"I am very impressed with the work being done helping to accelerate the retrograde of U.S. forces – it's making a positive impact in Afghanistan, as well as being economical for the Army," said Huntsville Center Commander Col. Robert Ruch, who visited Center employees and projects in Afghanistan in October.

He added that Bagram Support Group Afghanistan Commander Col. John D. Lawrence could not say enough good things about the program and has plenty of work on Bagram Airfield to keep the Huntsville Center team busy.

"Sustainability is a word that's used often," said Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Nall, BSG Command Sergeant Major. "The partnership with EFR to transfer environmentally friendly technologies to an economically disadvantage nation

supports not only the Army sustainability goals, but also makes a good business decision for the BSG and benefits everyone."

Huntsville Center maintains a forward office at BAF to oversee several projects, including range clearance activities and the EFR program. Sterling Global Operations was awarded the EFR task order under the Worldwide Environmental Remediation Services Multiple Award Task Order Contract in December 2014. The work is expected to be complete by the end of 2016.

The U.S. Army Reserve's 310th Engineer Detachment, Construction Management Team at BAF is executing the site remediation and footprint reduction mission, as prioritized by U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, 4th Resolute Support Sustainment Brigade, NATO, Army Garrison Directorate of Public Works and the Base Operating Support Integrator.



Photo by Kevin Walston, U.S. Forces Afghanistan

Karen Moore, project manager for the Environmental Footprint Reduction Project in Afghanistan, discusses a sustainability project at Bagram Airfield Oct. 18 with Huntsville Center Commander Col. Robert Ruch, Huntsville Center Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Burlin Emery, and contractors Acery Garcia, Sterling Global EFR regional manager; Fredrick Ouma, team lead; and Elmer Rivera, military heavy equipment operator.

Contracting specialist broadens career

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

A U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville contracting specialist was recently selected to fill a short-term career broadening assignment at a regional contracting office responsible for providing oversight of contractual actions.

Melody Hinkle spent four months working for the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting office located in Dallas, Texas. The PARC-Dallas manages and administers contracts coming from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Northwest, Southwest, South Pacific and Pacific Ocean Divisions.

Hinkle's assignment to PARC-Dallas is a result of USACE Contracting efforts to combat attrition and retain talented professionals coming up through the ranks in USACE.

In 2014 Stuart Hazlett, USACE Contracting Director, released the USACE Succession Planning Guide for Contracting Professionals and the USACE Developmental Assignment Guide for Contracting Professionals. These guides formalized USACE contracting employee career development and also allowed for and encouraged employee exchanges for those employees who want to experience a particular type of contracting at a different location, or temporarily serve in a new contracting role.

After seeing an e-mail message about the position coming available, Hinkle recognized the opportunity and applied.

Colleen O'Keefe, Huntsville Center Chief of Center Contracting, said Hinkle not only met the required qualifications to fill the position, she was also selected because she is viewed as the next generation of contracting officers who will likely fill the Army's contracting leadership positions.

"Melody is a rising star in Center Contracting and when the notification came down that PARC-Dallas had a requirement to fill the slot there, Melody was one of the first to raise her hand to go," O'Keefe said. "After reviewing her resume and noting her accomplishments here at the Center, USACE contracting leadership knew Hinkle was the right person for the PARC-Dallas job."

Hinkle said her developmental assignment at the PARC-Dallas office was an immense experience as she broadened her horizons as a procurement analyst through exposure to numerous USACE efforts in other regions of the country.

"My work at the PARC-Dallas certainly expanded my understanding of USACE and Army contracting actions as I became acquainted with a variety of unfamiliar contracting tools such as the Consolidation Determination and Finding Memorandum," Hinkle said.

"This type of document is not a new requirement, but



Courtesy photo

Melody Hinkle, center, reviews contracting documents with procurement analysts during her career broadening assignment with the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting-Dallas. Hinkle, a procurement analyst with the Huntsville Center, spent four months working at the PARC – Dallas office.

coming from Huntsville Center it was new to me," she said.

Throughout her assignment in Dallas, Hinkle said she not only delved into unfamiliar contracting actions, but also received greater, in-depth understanding of the day-to-day operations of a PARC office. She said balancing all of the areas of responsibility the PARC-Dallas office works with could be overwhelming at times.

Hinkle said the majority of the actions she tackled were Firm Fixed Price, Multiple Award Task Order Contracts, Single Award Task Order Contracts and Job Order Contracts.

"The JOCs were very new to me, but I was able to research a lot of information in AFARS (Army Federal Acquisition Regulation) about the requirements of JOCs and how they are used for construction acquisitions," she said.

Hinkle said she feels expanding her breadth of contracting knowledge through working at the PARC-Dallas will certainly help her career move forward and she recommends Huntsville Center contracting employees volunteer for any developmental opportunity that opens up within USACE.

"USACE does a lot of exciting work," Hinkle said. "During my time at the PARC-Dallas office, I got the opportunity to work on emergency dredgings, construction and Architectural-Engineering acquisitions for Japan; maritime facilities for Alaska, JOC acquisitions – it was a great way to gain valuable acquisition knowledge and it was a very rewarding and fulfilling experience."

Engineer recognized as Rising Star

By Amy Newcomb
Public Affairs Office

Women and minorities are still underrepresented in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math professions. According to data from Change the Equation, a coalition of Fortune 500 companies focused on increasing STEM education, the STEM workforce is no more diverse now than in 2001.

However, one Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville professional – an African-American female – was recently recognized for her achievements.

Huntsville, Alabama, native and electrical engineer, Porscha Porter, received a Technology Rising Star award at the 20th Women of Color STEM conference in Detroit, Michigan, Oct. 15-17.

“To be at the conference and see the level of women within the STEM field was just amazing,” Porter said. “To be recognized was just incredible. It was definitely a humbling experience to be in company like that and to say ‘I am in the field with these types of women who are doing these great things.’”

Porter attributes her success as an engineer to her robust career experiences and perseverance, but her motivation to be considered for the Technology Rising Star award came from her mentor, she said.

While on a developmental assignment earlier this year at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Headquarters, Porter met the deputy chief of staff.

“During my tenure as deputy chief of staff, I served as a mentor to those individuals selected to this assignment,” said Cheryl Partee, chief financial officer for USACE’s Southwestern Division. “After reading her bio and my initial conversation with her about career goals and aspirations, I knew Ms. Porter was something special.”

Partee described Porter as the future of USACE, an up and coming professional engineer with great leadership potential.

“I felt she needed to be exposed to the Women of Color conference, which is an outstanding diversity outreach program dedicated to Women of Color in (STEM) fields,” Partee said. “As a former winner of the Professional Achievement award in 2010, I felt this would be a great opportunity for her to network and be in the company of other great women of color.”

Porter was one of 30 women, in both the private and government sectors, recognized for her accomplishments in scientific and technical fields during the conference.

“One of the things they were talking about in the conference is that the number of women interested in this field has declined in recent years,” Porter said. “If you recognize women for their accomplishments, people notice that and hopefully more women will be interested in entering a STEM



Courtesy photo

Porscha Porter, U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville electrical engineer, receives a Technology Rising Star award at the 20th Women of Color STEM conference in Detroit, Michigan, Oct. 15-17.

field. It’s great to have that motivation.”

Partee said Porter’s participation at the conference was indicative of her character.

“She actively engaged with the students that were interested in a career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,” Partee said. “There is no better advocate to talk to engineering students than Porscha. Student feedback clearly indicated that they were surprised and happy to see someone that looks like them and has experienced some of the same challenges they face. Her passion for her work in the STEM field is phenomenal.”

American Association of University Women research shows that while women make up approximately half of the U.S. workforce, they hold less than 25 percent of STEM jobs. Women make up 20 percent of STEM graduates, but only 11 percent are practicing engineers.

“It’s important for women to be recognized for their accomplishments, not only because women are a minority in STEM fields but because it highlights these professions and hopefully encourages other women to be a part of them,” Porter said.

Porter has a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University and a Master of Science in Information Systems from Florida Institute of Technology. She is a Certified Acquisition Professional at Level III in Systems, Planning, Research, Development and Engineering, Level II in Program Management, Level II in Facilities Engineering and Level I in Test and Evaluation. Porter is a Project Management Professional, and a member of the Huntsville Project Management Institute and Society of American Military Engineers.

IO&T Program completes \$3.1 million West Point hospital expansion project

By Amy Newcomb
Public Affairs Office

The Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville's Initial Outfitting and Transition Program completed the final piece of a \$31.4 million hospital expansion at West Point, New York, last month. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Oct. 7.

The IO&T's \$3.1 million portion of the military construction project furnished new equipment and helped transition staff and patients into the Brian D. Allgood Ambulatory Clinic addition of the Keller Army Community Hospital throughout September.

Planning of the West Point project began in April 2013, with the contract awarded in September 2013, said Amanda Pommerenck, IO&T Program project manager for the West Point expansion.

"Work on the project started right after the contract was awarded," she said. "We began by both inventorying the existing hospital and clinic equipment and interviewing employees to determine their Standard Operating Procedures in their current space. Once we had an accurate inventory and assessment of the hospital staff's routines, we met key stakeholders from each section of the hospital to review their current equipment and begin to assess their requirements for their future space."

The IO&T Program supplies and transitions medical, research and non-medical equipment, including physical security systems, specialty telecom systems and other identified equipment/systems necessary to meet functional requirements of the facility as well as training on this equipment. It also supports the move of staff and patients into new and renovated

military healthcare and medical research laboratory facilities.

While these projects can appear simple, they can be quite complex, Pommerenck said.

"The Brian D. Allgood Ambulatory Clinic was a small project because we were equipping and managing the transition to an addition of the existing hospital, but we are currently finalizing a \$67 million equipment list for the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Maryland," she said.

The IO&T Program has several replacement hospitals under construction like Fort Bliss and Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Riley, Kansas; Fort Irwin, California and Camp Humphreys, South Korea.

An important issue IO&T must consider is the transition of medical personnel from the existing hospital to the new section or new hospital.

"The nurses know that they have to take a sample from this location to that location, but in the new hospital facility they have to relearn where everything is located, and there is very little overlap," she said. "They have to stop work in the old location and immediately start taking patients in the new location. You can't shut down a hospital."

After the transition of medical supplies, staff and patients has been completed from the existing facility to the new addition/facility, the IO&T Program provides turnover and close-out services that facilitate the turnover of the facility, documents and projects to both the installation and the Health Facilities Planning Agency.

The IO&T's total program scope is more than \$500 million, which includes services such as interior design, warehouse management and post occupancy evaluations.



Photo by Anthony Battista, U.S. Army

Left, Col. David A. Caldwell, New York District of the Army Corps of Engineers commander; Col. Michael Brennan, U.S. Army Health Facility Planning Agency commander; Command Sgt. Maj. Vincent E. Bond, West Point Health Service Area; Col. Brian S. Burlingame, West Point Health Service Area commander; Bradley Allgood and Lt. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr., U.S. Military Academy superintendent, cut the ribbon to ceremonially open the Brian D. Allgood Ambulatory Clinic addition to Keller Army Community Hospital at West Point, New York, Oct. 7.

Industry representatives attend Small Business Forum 2015, gain insight

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

More than 250 representatives from 150 small businesses across the nation attended the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville's Sixteenth Annual Small Business Forum Oct. 15 at the Jackson Center in Cummings Research Park, Huntsville, Alabama.

The event provides an opportunity for small business representatives to discuss their capabilities with Huntsville Center contracting officials and program managers and learn about upcoming opportunities to work with Huntsville Center.

In fiscal year 2015, Huntsville Center exceeded each Small Business category goal (except HubZone) by obligating more than \$500 million to small businesses.

Rebecca Goodsell, Huntsville Center Small Business Programs Office chief, said Huntsville policy is focused on providing "maximum practicable" prime and subcontracting opportunities to small firms. Goodsell said that has a direct impact not only on the services Huntsville Center provides, but also on the success of women-owned small businesses, small disadvantaged businesses and service disabled veteran-owned small businesses.

"Small businesses are the economic growth engine for America," Goodsell said. "Small businesses provide jobs, innovation and competition in industry."

Colleen O'Keefe, Huntsville Center Contracting chief, opened the forum by explaining that the contracting officers and project managers representing Huntsville Center at the forum were there to assist the attendees with learning about upcoming opportunities.

"We want you to be successful, so we want you to ask questions. We have people who can help you get the answers you need," O'Keefe said. "We really want to partner with you so we can help expand your opportunities."

O'Keefe, along with Chip Marin, director of Huntsville Center's Installation and Support Programs Management Directorate, also talked about current regulation changes affecting small business concerns to work with Huntsville Center.

Austin Boyed, Whitespace Innovations' representative attending the forum, said by touching on key contracting specifics, O'Keefe provided an enlightening service to the attendees.

"Ms. O'Keefe gave us an excellent overview of how the Corps does its contracting in Huntsville – and Mr. Marin

gave us a great overview of the 32 (contracting) vehicles you use as your procurement tools so we know which ones to specifically target," Boyed said. "It was one of the best (business) presentations I've attended."

According to Paul Stutts, who attended the forum representing the company Computer Training Center of Huntsville, talking with Center representatives during the forum's break-out session allows him to scout upcoming opportunities. He said those conversations are crucial to the future of his business.

Stutts said attending past small business forums has allowed him to have a better understanding of Huntsville Center's future direction and knowing program requirements had helped guide his business to the right areas.

Two small business forums ago, Stutts said by talking with project managers he learned Huntsville Center was standing up an information technology division for information assurance and the people working that division had requirements for specific IT security certifications. Stutts said through gaining that information, his company was able to relay his company's IT security training capabilities to the right people and subsequently secure the opportunity.

"This (the forum) is an opportunity to meet the right people in charge of programs so it saves time and money because we know the right people to talk to and that helps both of us be more efficient," Stutts said.



Photo by Amy Newcomb

Jeffrey Roberts, Huntsville Center's Chemical Demilitarization Directorate, right, shakes hands with Carl Young of Dad's Enterprises during the 2015 Small Business Forum at the Jackson Center in Cummings Research Park, Huntsville, Alabama, Oct. 15.

Project acquisition tracking improves mission, saves resources

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

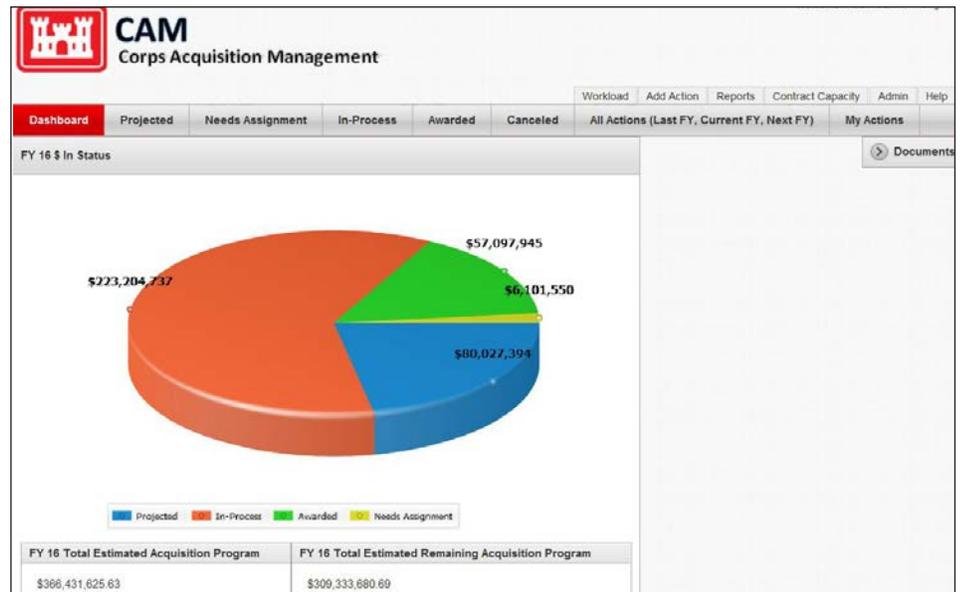
How U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center Huntsville project managers and contracting officers track project acquisition, contracting and production processes is transitioning to a new system that will ensure the Center's mission is met more effectively and save resources. Developed by cross-functional teams at Omaha District, the new Corps Acquisition Management system is currently going through accreditation process and is being considered by Headquarters USACE as the Corps' online business oversight tool.

CAM has already been implemented in several USACE districts and was eased into a test-run operation for some personnel at Huntsville Center. Since early summer the Center's Business Management Office facilitated a pilot of CAM in the Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate Facilities Division from June through July. The newer system was well received within the Facilities Division for its intuitive operation.

"CAM provided a significantly more user-friendly system for our Project Development Teams to process pre-award contract actions," said Gina Elliott, Facilities Division chief. "Unlike other systems previously used, CAM offers a tracking mechanism that provides automatic daily reports to each user's inbox and graphic representation of data for reports."

"Our pilot effort proved successful with a short learning curve during implementation and a seamless transition from the current system and all users on the pilot program reported that CAM was their system of choice."

Loren Norgren, BMO project manager for CAM implementation,



Courtesy graphic

A screen shot of the Corps Acquisition Management system recently implemented at the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville. CAM is billed as a faster Oracle-based application with a web-based user interface. It houses all contract actions by fiscal year in one consolidated system allowing for real-time analysis of the entire contract workload.

said his team understands change often comes with uncertainty, and it's important that he and his team continue to "sales-pitch" CAM benefits while conducting CAM training sessions before the old Huntsville Tracking System – the antiquated, older system previously used to track projects – was turned off at the Center for good in late October

"CAM really is a better system and it's so much easier to use," Norgren said. "Based on the pilot program within the Facilities Division, the user friendliness, processing speed and system responsiveness greatly contributed to mission resource savings and mission efficiencies."

Norgren explained what makes CAM better is it's a faster Oracle-based application with a web-based user interface and it houses all contract actions by fiscal year in one consolidated system allowing for real-time analysis of the entire contract workload.

"It tracks the acquisition, contracting and production processes of a project using the hub-and-spoke concept, with the hub being the primary data source from which all other applications (spokes) are driven," Norgren said.

He explained that when the project manager initiates a project into CAM, that project becomes the hub – the basis for current and projected requirements. The spokes are all the other processes projects require such as contract compliance and post award reviews. Norgren said the bottom line is that retaining all contract actions by fiscal year allows for easier communication between contracting, project management and executive management, and that saves time.

"Saving time saves money," Norgren said. "By using CAM we see significant savings in resources through enabling teams to make focused business decisions."

FY 2015 service order contracts increase

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

Fiscal year 2015 saw a shift in customers' requirements resulting in the growth of the smaller service order contracts Huntsville Center provides for customers.

Charles Ford, Huntsville Center programs director, said he believes as installations are beginning to feel the effects of budget cuts, they have been more focused on centralized management at the enterprise level.

"We're seeing an increase in the service contracts installations want in place to provide recurring and preventative maintenance to a lot of their mechanical control systems," Ford said.

As of Sept. 24, Ford said most of the Huntsville Center programs with service contract increases exceeding last year's orders were under the Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate.

Arthur Martin III, ISPM Directorate deputy director, said many of his directorate's programs have seen an increase in business this fiscal year. Martin said Information Technology Support, Base Operations and DLA-Fuels programs have increased in the volume of contracts with Facility Repair and Renewal and the ITS programs seeing noticeable spikes in business in the last quarter of FY 2015.

"Overall, ISPM is seeing potential in a number of our programs," Martin said. "We expect ISPM to continue staffing to the current requirements as well as the new opportunities that continue to develop. The Cyber Security, Energy Information Management, Information Assurance and Information Technology areas are leading the charge, but there are many others – like our Base Operations Program – that have the opportunity for future growth."

Under ISPM's Facilities Division, the Base Operations program is a relatively new program that grew from the ISPM Special Projects Program after the Army Installation Management Command leaned on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to support smaller service order contracts to maintain facilities and infrastructure at certain installations.

Huntsville Center stepped in to fill the need and the Base Operations Program is currently supporting National Defense University at Fort McNair, Washington, District of Columbia; Fort Riley, Kansas; Special Operations Command South, Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida; and Fort McCoy Garrison and the 88th Reserve Support Command, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin.

Base Operations Program Manager Laura Lokey-Flippo said the real growth came to the program when the 88th RSC came to Huntsville Center with a need for an acquisition strategy to maintain operations at its more than 300 locations



Photo by Amy Newcomb

Matthew Morelan, project manager, watches as Jennifer Letson, contract specialist, rings a bell after the Utility Monitoring and Control Systems program team awarded the first of the last 75 task orders for the fiscal year. To help build morale, the UMCS team bell will ring after each task order is awarded.

in 19 states in the upper Midwest.

The Base Operations Program provides operation and maintenance engineering support and contract acquisitions for our customers for everything from snow removal to grounds upkeep to whole facility maintenance, Lokey-Flippo said.

"There's been a great need at Army Reserve sites for base operation services. Because we structure contracts to best suit our customer's needs and analyze our acquisition approach for efficiencies and optimization while fostering partnerships with the customer to allow ownership in execution of the contracts, I anticipate this program will grow exponentially in the future," she said.

Not only has there been an increase in smaller service order contracts at the Center this year, there has also been an increase in contracts with small businesses.

As of Sept. 29, Huntsville Center had obligated \$1.6 billion with 4,360 actions. Of that amount, nearly \$544 million and 2,095 actions were with Small Business. Overall, Huntsville Center exceeded each Small Business category goal, except HubZone.

"Our (Huntsville Center) goal was 36 percent and as of Sept. 28, the Center reached nearly 44 percent of its obligations going to small businesses," said Rebecca Goodsell, Huntsville Small Business Programs Office chief.

"Small businesses are the engine for economic growth in America. Small businesses provide jobs, innovation and competition in industry. Huntsville Center policy is a catalyst for economic growth," Goodsell said.



Contracting Corner:

Over and Above work solution

By Raven A. Nall
Contracting Directorate

Do you need a solution to capture unforeseen requirements that occur during contract performance? If so, Over and Above Work may be the solution for your program.

O&A means work discovered during the course of performing overhaul, maintenance and repair efforts that are within the general scope of the contract, not covered by the line items for the basic work under the contract, and necessary in order to satisfactorily complete the contract.

In accordance with (IAW) DFARS, PGI 217.77, contracts for the performance of OMR of various items like aircraft, engines, ground support equipment and ships generally contain O&A work requirements. When they do, the contracting officer shall establish a separate contract line item for the O&A work.

Below are some Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville program examples where O&A work may be applicable:

Access Control Points Program: O&A work can occur during the upgrading of installation gates security equipment and facilities to meet new standards and assure consistency Army-wide.

Army Metering Program: O&A work can occur during the enhancement and maintenance efforts of meters and global meter data management systems.

Energy Savings Performance Contract Program: O&A work can occur during project implementation efforts which include periodic equipment inspections, tests, calibrations and maintenance tasks, and actions required to ensure that existing systems are compatible with ESPC energy conservation measures and operate as intended.

Electronic Security Systems Center of Expertise: O&A work can occur during the service, maintenance, expansion, and upgrade efforts of ESS and automated control systems to include building automation systems; fire alarm systems; life safety systems; chemical, biological and radiological detection and response systems; mass notification systems; and other related electronic systems.

Facilities Reduction Program: O&A work can occur during site restoration efforts such as backfilling, grading, reseeding, etc.

Facilities Repair and Renewal Program: O&A work can occur during the design/build renovations and facility maintenance and repair of federal agencies.

Initial Outfitting and Transition Program: O&A work can occur if OMR of the facility is needed during the transition from construction complete to functional Soldier ready efforts.

Medical Repair and Renewal Program: O&A work can concur during the repair, replacement, renovation, sustainment, restoration and modernization efforts of the

medical facility.

Operations and Maintenance Engineering Enhancement Program: O&A work can occur during facility infrastructure operations and building systems maintenance efforts.

Range and Training Land Program CX: O&A work can occur during the overhaul and maintenance efforts for Army automated ranges.

Utility Monitoring and Control Systems CX: O&A work can occur during the maintenance, expansion and upgrade efforts of UMCS, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems to include chiller/boiler systems, supervisory control and data acquisition systems, fire alarm and life safety systems, and other automated control systems including chemical/biological/radiological contaminant detection/filtration/response, utilities metering, ESS, and security and force protection measures including barriers, fencing, gates, window treatments, hardening, and lighting.

The Huntsville Center Contracting Directorate will publish the O&A work policy during the second quarter of fiscal year 2016. If you have any questions, contact Raven Nall at Raven.A.Nall@usace.army.mil.

Volunteer engineer participates in local elementary school STEAM fair

By Amy Newcomb
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville participated in the annual Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math Fair at Mill Creek Elementary School in Madison, Alabama, Nov. 10.

The event was held to promote student interest in many science, technology, engineering and math fields, as well as arts fields, which include graphic arts and photography.

Structural Engineer John Nevels, Directorate of Engineering, Huntsville Center, volunteered to set up an Explosives Safety exhibit for more than 500 students between grades two and six. A video demonstrating blast effects helped draw the students to the Corps' STEAM Fair table, where Nevels explained his role in the Explosives Safety Program.

"Protective construction is more my lane," Nevels said. "To do that you have to protect people from overpressure, the blast; thermal effects, the fire ball; and primary and secondary fragments. Primary fragments are stuff that is attached to the explosives. Secondary fragments, or debris, is when the building blows up."

Nevels' exhibit included a cannonball and a primary fragment from previous blast demonstrations that the students were able to touch.

Mill Creek fifth-grader Brian Johnson enjoys math and science and was inspired by Nevels' video and explanation of his career field. After visiting the table several times, Johnson said he plans to be a structural engineer when he grows up.

"I really like to see things blow up, and I also like to build stuff because when I was younger I liked to build with Legos," Johnson said.

Sparking interest with students like Johnson is why Nevels enjoys participating in STEM outreach events.

"It's important to support STEM events for children because they are the ones that will take all of our respective fields to the next level," Nevels said. "They are the ones that will carry on and advance what we do in our careers, keeping us at the cutting edge as a nation. We've got to keep them interested, and hopefully these STEM events can help out with that."

Nevels said he also likes to show people that engineering is more than just number crunching and computers.

"There's a real-world side of what we do, and some of the applications of our work are pretty interesting to most people," Nevels said. "I like to see students' eyes get a little wider when they see that there are some cool sides of STEM fields."

Volunteers like Nevels make STEM

events such as the Mill Creek STEM/STEAM fair successful, said Jacqueline Smith, fifth and sixth grade STEM Lab teacher.

"This was a priceless experience that will hopefully inspire our students to explore a career in a STEM/STEAM-based field," Smith said.

STEAM outreach events are successful because students sometimes need to see the practical application of how things are done to think they can do it, Smith said.

"They get to see real life examples of how people use STEM in their everyday work. They get to see all the ways that STEM is used throughout the world," she said. "It gives them a positive boost that helps them want to learn more about it, makes them want to do their homework and makes them want to find out things based in science, technology, engineering and math."



Photo by Amy Newcomb

John Nevels, a structural engineer with the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville shows Mill Creek Elementary School fifth-graders a primary fragment from previous blast demonstration during a STEAM event Nov. 10. STEAM is the combination of science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

Volunteers inspired by STEM students at UAHuntsville InSPIRESS event

By Amy Newcomb
Public Affairs Office

More than 45 students from three high schools participated in the Innovative System Project for the Increased Recruitment of Emerging STEM Students (InSPIRESS) event at the University of Alabama Huntsville Dec. 11, to gain an understanding of engineering requirements, design process and the role a customer plays in design.

InSPIRESS, a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) outreach program, provides high school students with an opportunity to develop and design a scientific payload for NASA interplanetary robotic missions-of-interest, said Matthew Turner, UAHuntsville principal researcher in Modeling & Simulation.

These conceptual payloads – science experiments that occur on a planet or moon – are developed to “ride aboard” a spacecraft on the interplanetary missions designed by UAHuntsville senior design undergraduates, he said.

Last year, the mission was to Jupiter’s moon Europa. Turner said many students designed payloads that attempted different ways to search for “life” in Europa’s subsurface ocean or sample Europa’s surface to determine its age.

“This year, we are exploring Saturn’s moon Titan, which is the only moon in the solar system that has an atmosphere. So, the payloads are different ways to explore the atmosphere, weather balloons, different instruments, etc.,” Turner said.

And because it adds to the fun and experience, InSPIRESS is a competition, he added.

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville provided judges for the InSPIRESS event.

The competition included an open house poster session and a final review where student teams explained the purpose of their design – and reasons for their design decisions – to judges. From the judges’ evaluations scores, points were totaled to determine the winners.

In the past, winners of the competition have traveled to NASA Headquarters in Washington, D.C., to present their ideas to the heads of the NASA Planetary Science Division inside the NASA Science Mission Directorate.

Huntsville Center employees Betina Johnson, Ordnance and Explosives Design Center chief, and Russell Dunford, chief of operations, volunteered as open house poster



Photo by Amy Newcomb

Russ Dunford, U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville chief of operations, speaks to McCoy Floyd, left, and Zachery Amerson, Palmetto Scholars Academy, North Charleston, South Carolina, about their conceptual payload during the InSPIRESS event at UAHuntsville, Dec. 11.

session judges, which allowed them to walk around and speak with student teams about their conceptual payloads.

Johnson said she was encouraged by the students’ ability to understand the relationship between STEM majors and how these fields contributed to their projects and hopes the students continue to participate in STEM events.

“The Corps of Engineers is very heavily focused on the science, technology, engineering and math disciplines, and we are looking to the future generations to execute our programs,” she said.

Dunford said many students he spoke with during the event were interested in a future in engineering, and he was optimistic as to what the future would bring.

“Many of these high school students gave a presentation that would rival most college students,” Dunford said. “So, you really get a great sense of what is coming behind us and walk away thinking things are probably going to be alright.”

Jason Bray, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate project manager, volunteered as a final review judge to assess formal engineering presentations for three of the student teams.

“I was blown away by their knowledge of the subject and their scope of understanding,” he said. “This is our future.”

Bray said he was impressed with the event, and will encourage his coworkers to volunteer for the InSPIRESS event at UAHuntsville in the spring.



Ethics Corner

What in the world are NFE's? Are they contagious? Should I worry about them?

By Clay Weisenberger
Office of Counsel

A non-federal entity or "NFE" is a "self-sustaining, non-federal person or organization that is established, operated and controlled by any individual(s) acting outside the scope of any official capacity as an officer, employee or agent of the federal government." In non-legal speak, it is simply anything that is not the federal government. This includes contractors, charities, professional organizations, churches and your neighbors.

Why should you worry about them? Because NFEs are prohibited sources, which are subject to the gift rules. There are numerous exemptions and exceptions to the gift rules, but the most important point to remember is that a federal employee must not, solicit or accept a gift from a prohibited source that is given because of the Federal employee's official position. There are also prohibitions on official endorsement

of NFEs by agencies or federal employees.

Examples of NFEs are the Association of the United States Army, Army Engineer Association, Society of American Military Engineers, Red Cross, Fisher House Foundation, the American Heart Association, Rotary Club, and all other organizations that are not part of the federal government.

Does that mean you cannot participate in the activities of NFEs? No. If you want to participate in your NFE's local chapter, the scope of permitted activities will be shaped by whether you participate in your "official capacity" as a military or civilian federal employee, or in your personal capacity as a private individual. In your official capacity, you may participate in certain NFE events, if authorized by your agency, and you may offer non-preferential logistical support to the chapter, but you may not serve as an officer of the organization in an official capacity as a military or civilian federal employee or express or imply endorsement of

the organization. On the other hand, in your personal capacity as a chapter member, you may serve as an officer of the organization, making it clear that you are not serving in an official capacity, and you may engage in limited fundraising activities on behalf of the NFE.

Other areas where it is important to understand the rules and their exemptions or exceptions concern attendance at NFE events in either personal or official capacity, accepting reimbursement for travel and related expenses from an NFE, and participation in conferences involving NFEs.

Consult with the Office of Counsel before engaging in an activity involving an NFE. We can help you understand the rules and ensure that you are complying with them. If necessary, counsel can assist you in obtaining a Joint Ethics Regulation section 3-211 determination, which confirms, in writing, that the particular activity complies with legal and ethical requirements.

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